



Empowering Work Working Group

7th July 1-3pm

The Food Network for Ethical Trade



Competition Law and Safe Space Statements

Participant Identity:

*Please display your **name** and the **business name***

Competition Law Statement

“We are meeting to discuss issues raised in the forum of the Food Network for Ethical Trade.

We take competition compliance seriously. Whilst discussions can cover matters of interest to our industry, we cannot discuss or exchange sensitive commercial information.

If at any time during this meeting, you think our discussions may be in breach of competition rules, please inform the Chair. The Chair may close the meeting at any time if the chair believes that discussions are in breach of competition law”

Safe & Brave Space Statement

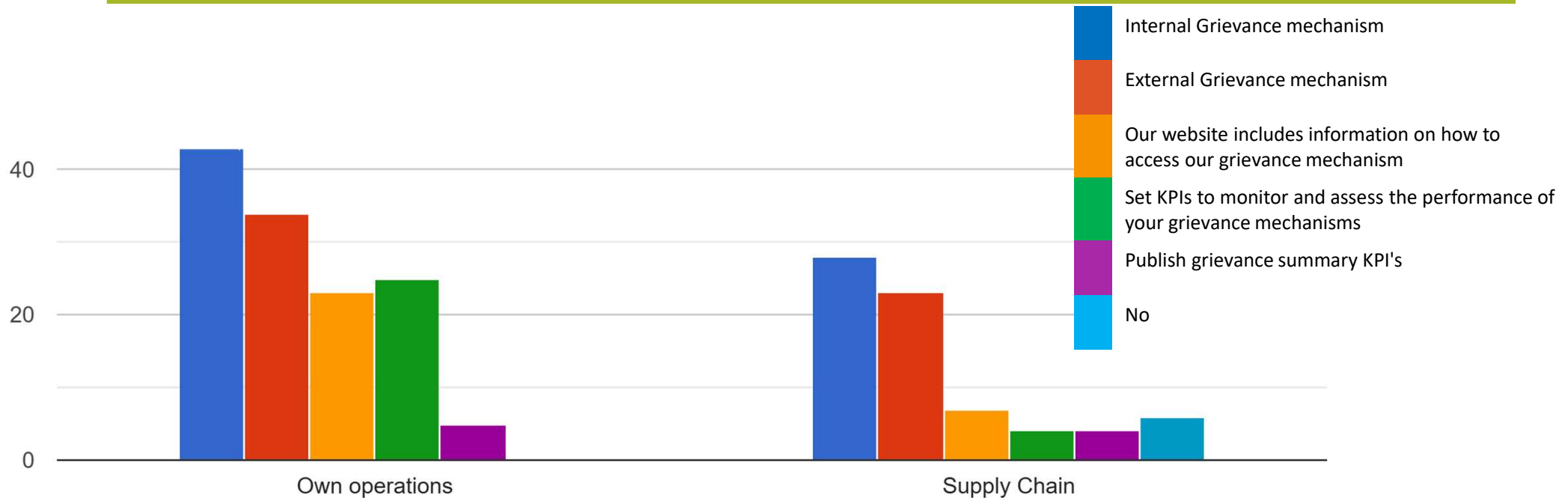
*The fortnightly members call is a **safe & brave** space for members to discuss and exchange ideas on human rights risks and improvement actions and all are reminded to please always respect this principle.*

Agenda - Empowering Work Q2 - 7th July 1-3pm

Timings		Item	Speaker
13.00 - 13.10	10 mins	Introductions and welcome to New Members and competition statement	Surmaya Talyarkhan, FNET
13.10 - 13.25	15 mins	Video and discussion – what is the point of engaging workers?	Claire Donovan
13.25 - 13.45	20 mins	Hall Hunter – worker feedback on GMs	Worker speakers
14.05 – 14.25	20 mins	Case studies, including Ngaje and Ulula	Gillian Haythornthwaite, Ngaje Jo Speed, PDM
14.25 – 14.30	5 mins	Q3 Planning	Anna Pike
14.35 – 14.45	10 mins	Discussion of useful resources: Reckitt/Oxfam toolkit	Anna Pike
14.45 – 15.00	15 mins	Effective Grievance Mechanisms	Clare Lissaman, Oxfam



Grievance Mechanisms



- KPI's Measured: Number and types of grievance raised, resolved, % escalated to statutory grievance, % statutory grievance resolved
- **81%** members require suppliers to develop their own grievance mechanism
- **79%** Do not evaluate supplier grievance data for high-risk suppliers to identify trends, gaps and opportunities and work together to improve their grievance mechanisms
- **Only 54%** members engaging with suppliers to improve their grievance mechanism effectiveness

Introductions

- Your name
- Company name
- Your role
- The worst job you did as a teenager



What is the point of engaging workers? Ask Ted Lasso...

“Careful son, the gaffer’s fixed the water pressure”



Engaging workers – what stops it working?

You say.
We listen.
We act.

A common reason that workers **don't engage** with worker voice, complaint or grievance processes is that they ***don't feel that anything will change***



The complaint process is a **structure**

The **act** of changing something that is a problem is a **symbol**

The structure **will not be embedded** unless **symbols** of the importance to management are **visible**

Your surroundings affect your mood – and become what you consider *normal*

What's considered to be normal becomes **your culture**



We want a culture where **niggles/concerns** are voiced – and can be addressed before they become a **complaint** or a **grievance**

Engaging workers – what stops it working?



Bit of background...



A common reaction to worker voice



perhaps not the snacks bit....

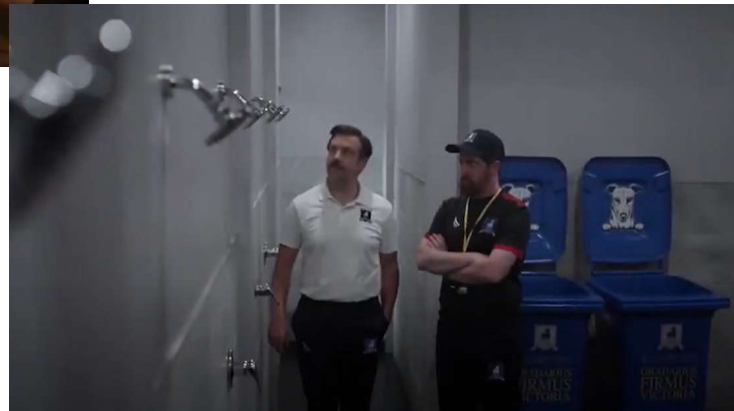
The key impacts.....



1) The reaction from Ted and Coach Beard to the suggestion – no delegation – no report writing

2) They go to see the issue themselves –

Ted Knows he wouldn't want to use the shower himself – those with the power to change the showers don't use the showers

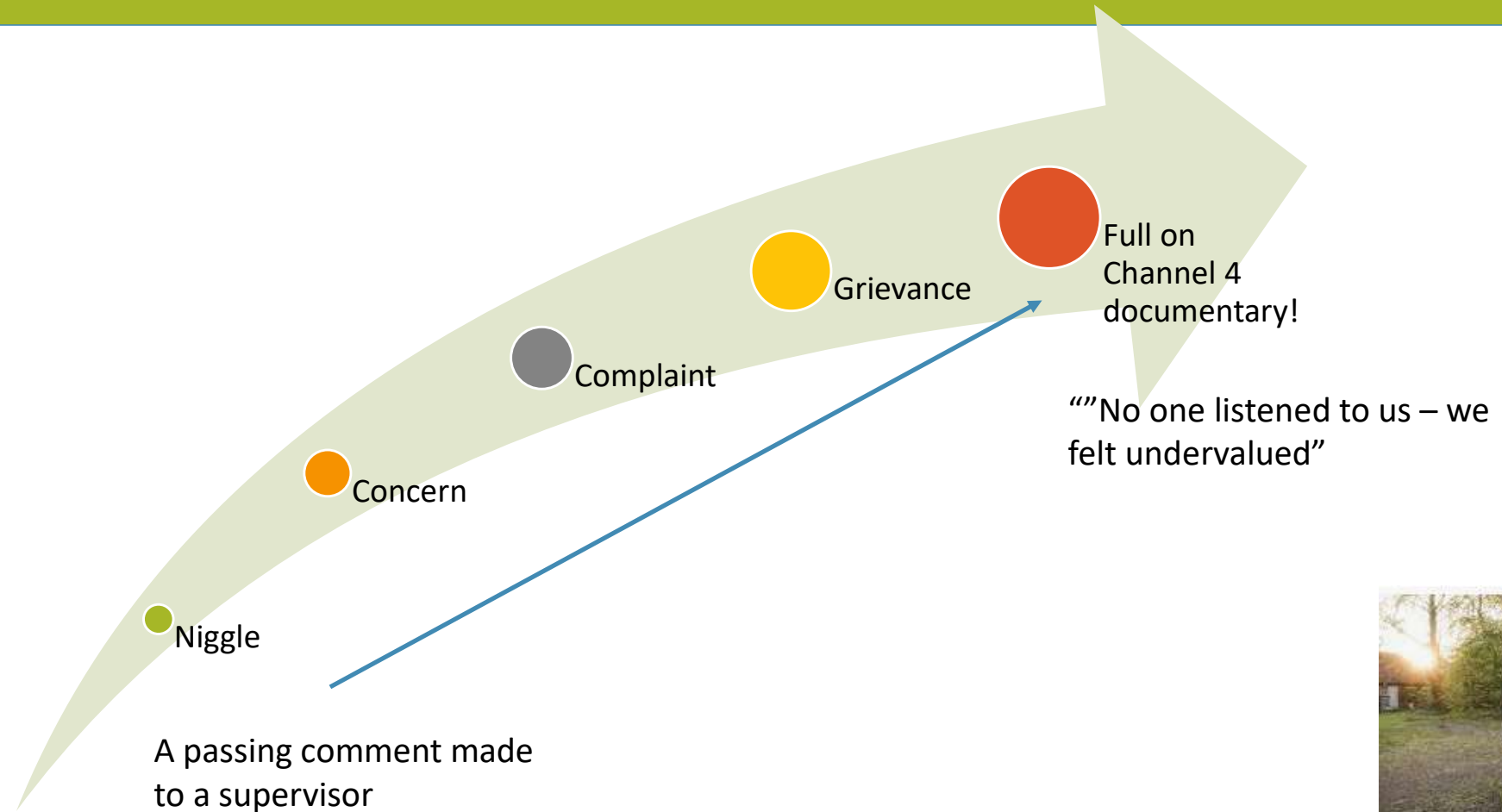


3) The senior squad leader starts to notice that words are meaning actions – a grudging respect develops



It's Roy, ever his grumpy self. And he's starting to realise that the culture around here is going to change for the better.

So what is the alternative?



Worker perspective

ABBOSJON MAKHKAMOV, HALL HUNTER



Case studies

Gillian Haythornthwaite, Ngage
Jo Speed, PDM

I AM GLAD THAT OUR FARM
PROVIDES SUCH AN
OPPORTUNITY. I LIKE MY FARM.
THANK YOU VERY WELL YOU TAKE
CARE



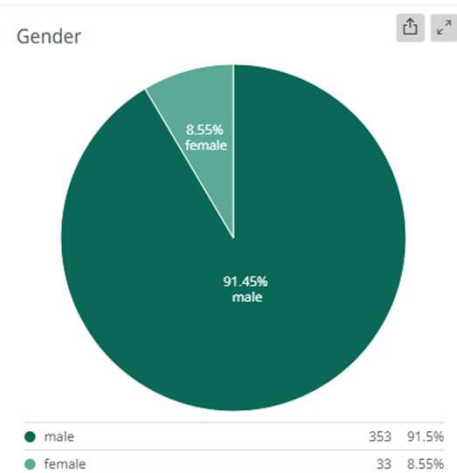
Survey in conjunction with the
Seasonal Worker Taskforce

Grower rank is **56** / 145 ranked growers
*Only growers with at least 10 participants are ranked.
(Total # of growers: **277**)

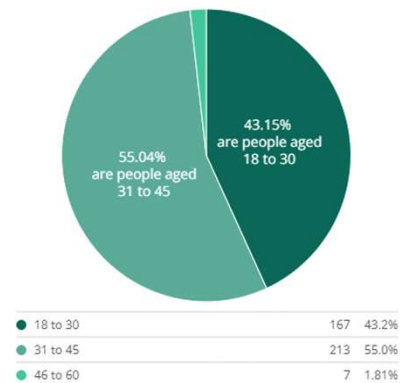
4.63 | score out of 5

415 Total Participation

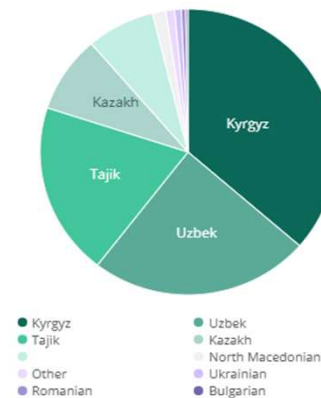
Who doesn't love a bit of data – getting to know your demographics



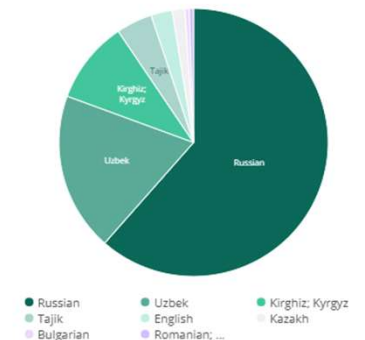
How old are you?



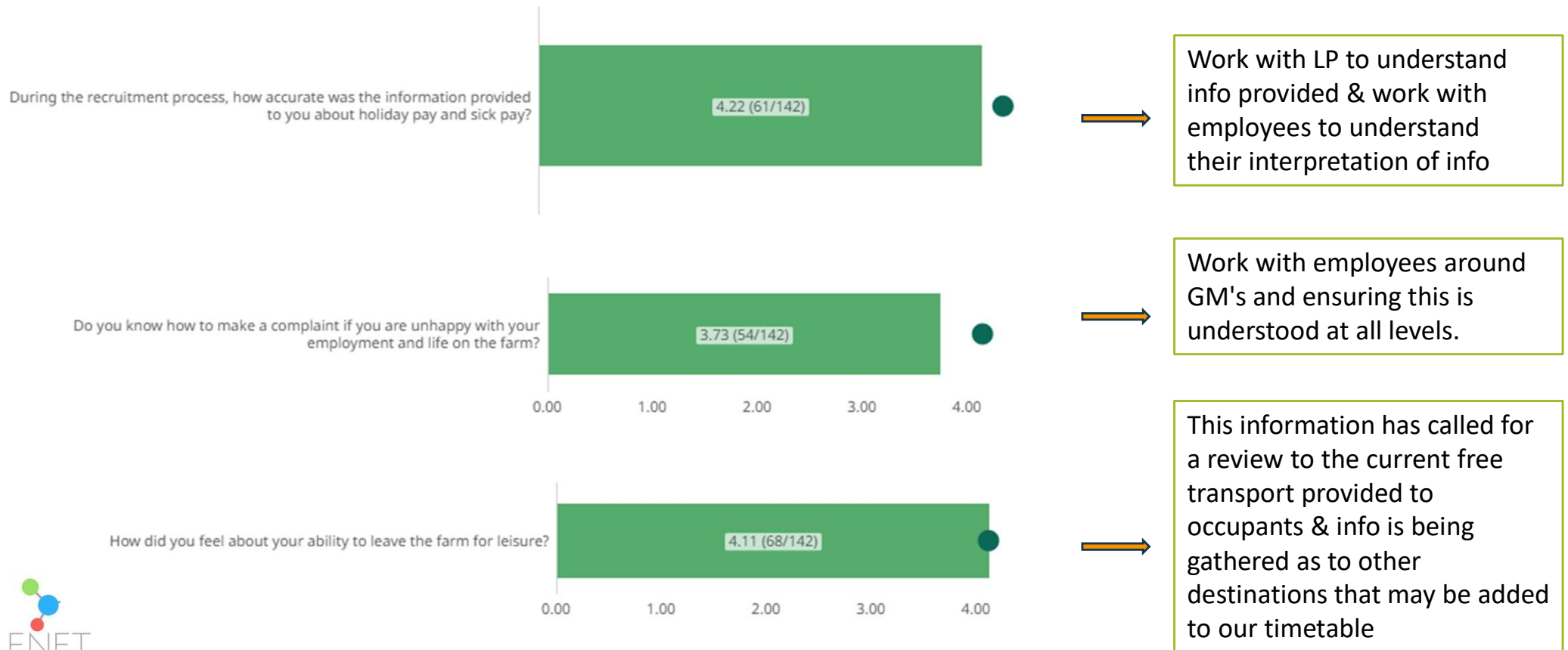
Nationality



Preferred language



How to use the data to help you.





Case Study – Bakkavor Labour Provider Audits

Agency workers are surveyed prior to the audit and results verified by the auditor as part of the audit

2024 results:

12 Polls
36% Response rate

733 agency workers
responded – 45% increase

58% Males
42% Females
1 x person – Non-binary

200 Free Text Comments
113 – Positive
73 – Negative
14 - Neutral

Issues identified:
Fees, Grievance, Bakkavor
Treatment, Accommodation, ID

Areas of Concern	2022	2023	2024
Paid a fee for a job	4%	2*	2%
Paid a fee to guarantee a shift	2%	5*	1%
Paid the cost of a passport	1%	1%	1%
Don't raise issues as nothing ever gets done	7%	4%	4%
Don't get support whilst working at Bakkavor	13%	4%	3%
Live in labour provider accommodation	4%	1%	2%
Don't know where their identification papers are	2%	2%	2%
The agency has their identification papers	3%	3%	3%

Type of Comment	Nos	% of Negative Comments
Bakkavor Manager Attitude	6	8%
Issues with PPE	4	5%
Issues with Agency	3	4%
Cancelled/Short Shifts	8	11%
Discrimination / abuse from Bakkavor staff	8	11%
Miscellaneous	10	14%
Good or Neutral*	33	45%

After the audit, the survey results are shared with site HR and the LP – actions are agreed to address issues

Case Study – Bakkavor Modern Slavery Random Checks

Part of the Modern Slavery
Action Plan 2025

Run annually in January,
April and September

Set questions with free
text facility

Documented
conversations with people



Target	January	April
5% of workforce	790	641

Question	Yes	No
Does the person know the indicators of modern slavery?	98%	2%
Does the person know how to report modern slavery issues?	97%	3%
Has the person seen these indicators in anyone working for Bakkavor?**	3%	83%
Did the person report this issue?	10%	90%

January:
Why didn't people report issues:
Because they were scared
Agency worker was uncomfortable
to raise issue
Hearsay

April:
Why didn't people report issues:
20% - unsure if it was an indicator
16% - did not know how to report it
16% - did not want to cause trouble



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DISCOVER. DEVELOP. DISTINGUISH.



Planning for Q3

ACTIONS FROM THIS MEETING AND PLANNING FOR Q3

Empowering Work Working Group

Group Objectives : Embed skills and knowledge of best practice related to workers in Gender Equality, Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms in own operations and supply chains through enhanced learning and implementing Due Diligence practices. Turn knowledge into Impact and tracking progress

Planned Activity and Outputs

Q1

- Develop Guidance for closing the gap on Living Wage
- Finalise the design and Launch the Skills Matrix & self-assessment questionnaire
- Sign of and launch the Employee Engagement Maturity Framework
- Invite TUC to share insights & targets for 2025 – build into plans

Output

- Finalise the Worker engagement maturity framework
 - Share Guidance on closing the gap on Living Wage – external resource
- Impact:** Workers report that business are moved through the employee maturity framework

Q2

- Signpost all Resources for members and recap (Reckitt- Effective WV; GM's; LW)
- Members embed the WG tools & resources to monitor and track their progress on worker centric issues.
Establish baseline on
 - Living Wage
 - Gender Equality
 - Worker Voice
 - GM's

Output:

Case studies on effective G/M's in supply chains and own operations
Impact : Improvement in KPI numbers on Workers Grievance Mechanisms in FNET baseline survey Q15.2, 15.3 22.1 (2)

Q3

- In person meeting to look at Collective Bargaining Agreements and Worker Representation.
- How are vulnerable groups and female populations voices heard.
- Worker Rights in Scotland.

Output

Summary briefing on Collective bargaining agreements and worker representations in Food and Retail
Impact: Businesses report improved progress on Worker Representation Q15.1 through tracking Q22.1 (8)

Q4

- Track and report progress from Q2 meeting and members to share case studies on how the resources and tools have improved livelihoods and conditions for people within own operations and supply chains
- Develop the 2026/27 WG Plans based on results of survey & member reported key challenges

Output

Member case studies on progress made on Grievance Mechanisms, Living wage closing the gap and Worker Engagement. Member chose one topic to report and share progress
Impact: Improved KPI's FNET Survey Q 22.1, 2, 8, 9, 11,12

Expected member actions /Impact measures : Members actively participate through HR colleagues in the workshops and implement pilots and share case study examples for the wider membership.

Impact measures - #of businesses that have implemented GM/Gender/Worker Voice and agreed metrics to assessed baseline to start to measure in 2025. #of businesses that have made progress in closing the gap on Living Wage Reference 22.1 (11.12) on FNET Baseline survey

Budget required - £4000

for Developing Guidance on Living Wage & Maturity Framework for Employee Engagement

Can you host Empowering Work in Q3?

25th September – in person meeting

30 people



Signposting useful resources

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES ON GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS

Useful resources on grievance mechanisms

From FNET Learning Library

GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS TOOLKIT

Practical guidance for companies in supply chains on
how to implement effective grievance mechanisms



Developed by
Oxfam Business
Advisory Service



Useful resources on grievance mechanisms

From FNET Learning Library

Grievance Mechanisms Toolkit

- Big document – 107 pages
- Very comprehensive. Don't let it overwhelm you. Keep context and use it as relevant to your maturity.

Would recommend using the toolkit as follows:

- Complete the self assessment tool to understand if you are beginner, established or advanced
- Map your existing grievance mechanisms (be honest)
- Complete the gap analysis
- Put together an action plan

Next steps

- What are your current priorities / hot spots?
- Pick 1 or 2 improvement areas

Effective Grievance Mechanisms

CLARE LISSAMAN, OXFAM



IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS



OXFAM

Oxfam Business Advisory Service

Who We Are: Oxfam



Oxfam is a global movement of millions of people who share the belief that, in a world rich in resources, **poverty isn't inevitable**. We tackle the root causes of poverty and create societies where empowered individuals can thrive. We will always act, we will speak out, and **we won't live with poverty**.



Working in more
than 90
countries



Over 22 million people
reached in 2017/18
53% were women and girls



Working with 3,000
partner organisations
and 50,000 volunteers

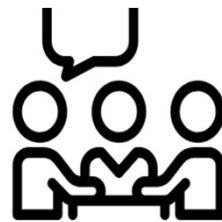
Who We Are: Oxfam Business Advisory Service



OBAS provides **companies with advice and guidance** on key issues and challenges in their sustainability strategies with the aim of **driving forward more positive business practices** and contributing to a future where business plays a leading role in **overcoming poverty, respecting human rights and empowering women.**



One-off
advice



Ongoing advice
& support



Bespoke research
& reports

What Grievance Mechanisms Are



A grievance mechanism (GM) is a process that can be used by individuals, workers, communities and/or civil society organisations that are being negatively affected by certain business activities and operations.

Operational grievance mechanisms are **established at site-level** with the goals to:

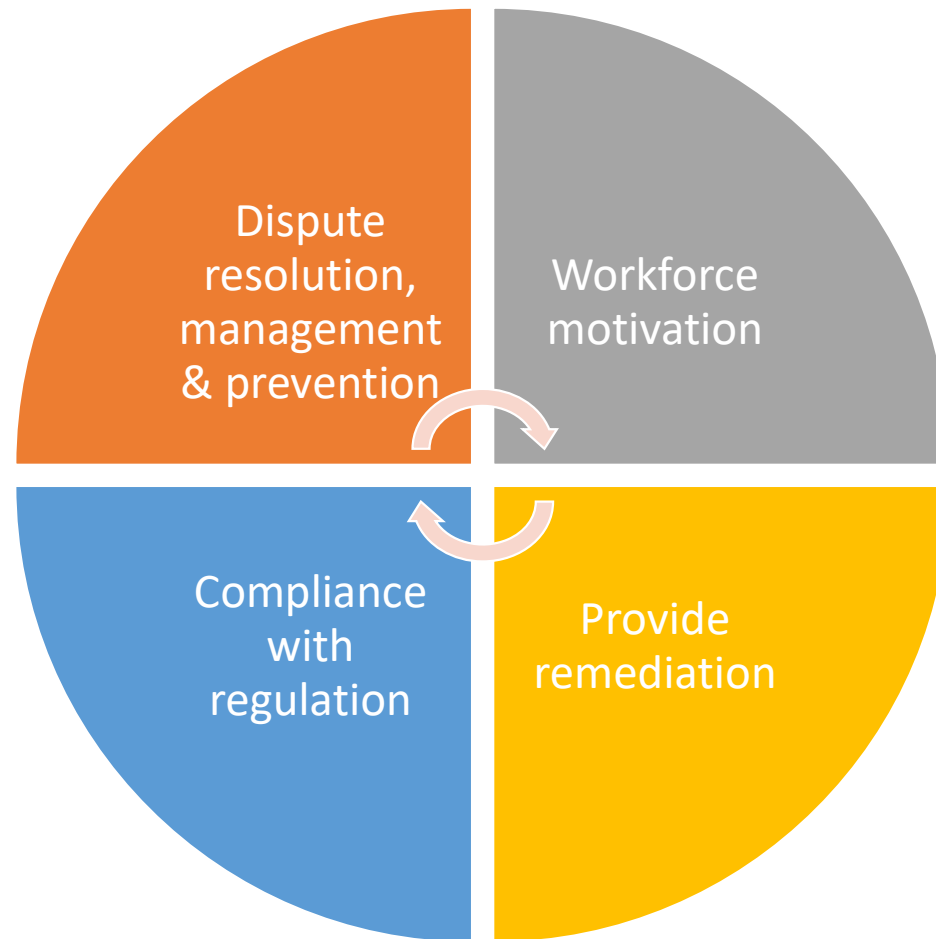


Enable workers and affected communities to feel empowered to speak up and have their concerns acknowledged and addressed.



Be easy to access and efficient in providing remedy by being located closest to where problems occur.

Why Grievance Mechanisms are good for your business



Not a “one size fits all” approach, but criteria

UNGPs Effectiveness Criteria



1. Legitimate



2. Accessible



3. Predictable



4. Equitable



5. Transparent



6. Rights compatible



**7. Source of learning
for the company**



**8. Based on
engagement and
dialogue**

Overview of OBAS support



Guidance for suppliers

- UNGPs criteria
- Desk based research of existing approaches and practical examples
- Interviews with key informants

Hands on support to supplier sites

- Companies across Italy, India, Pakistan, China, Peru and UK
- One-on-one meetings

Insights and learnings

- To make Reckitt toolkit practical and user-friendly
- To provide additional support to other sites

Pitfalls

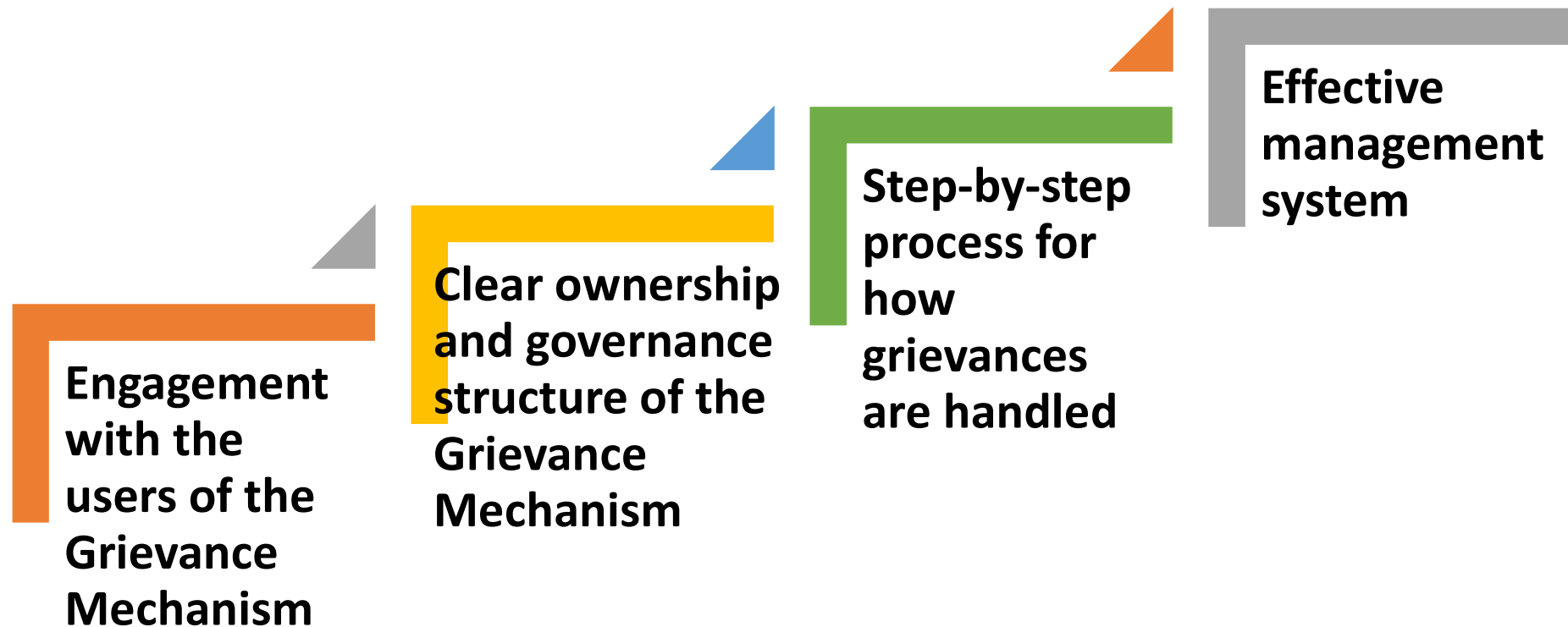
- No grievances is a good thing
- If grievances are anonymous, it is impossible to resolve them
- HR department is best suited to handle the process



Solutions

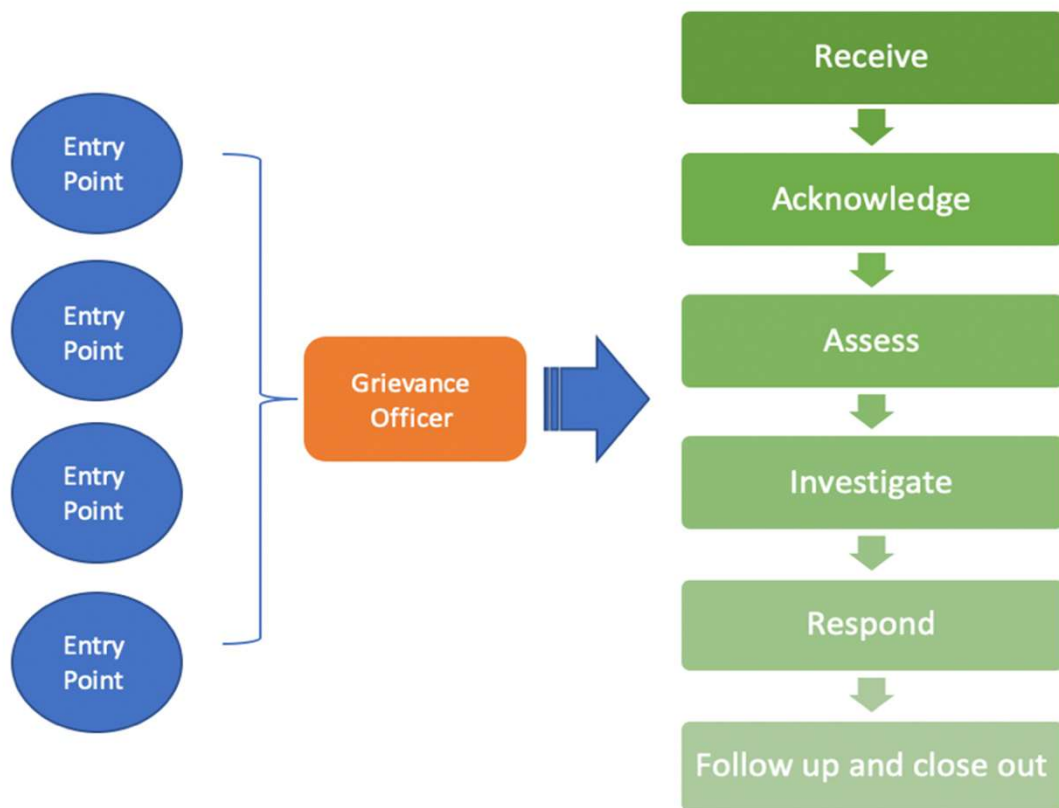
- Engage with intended users
- Address root causes and take actions across the board
- Involve intended users in implementation of the GM

Key steps companies took



What GMs look like in practice

Figure 1. Typical flow of a grievance mechanism



- Accessible through multiple entry points
- Have a single coordination point responsible for managing the process
- Combine different tools and approaches to handle a grievance
- Be adaptable to the specific context and flexible to handle the specific nature of each individual grievance

Lessons from the process

Trust

- Participation of workers in the design of grievance mechanisms is key to their success, but building trust takes time

Empowerment

- Empower workers with the skills, tools and time to fully participate in the process

Transparency

- Increase transparency by tracking grievances and communicating back to workers

Change in mindset

- Companies may need extra support in implementing the toolkit until they get to mindset shift

Practical guidance

- Companies benefit from very direct and spelled out guidance

Supplier feedback



It is more than reviewing a policy, it implies a new way of working and communicating with workers
(Manager)



These conversations were eye opening
(Manager)



Before, there was no visibility about the procedure and no clarity about the role of the union. Now everything is clarified on paper
(Union rep)



It was eye opening that speaking to employees can give you very valuable feedback, if you give them the right forum to share ideas
(Manager)

A photograph showing three people walking away from the camera through a large field filled with rows of small green seedlings planted in black plastic bags. The person on the left is wearing a blue patterned shirt and a white cap. The two people on the right are wearing white t-shirts with the word 'earthworm' printed in red on the back. The background features a dense line of tropical trees, including palm trees, under a cloudy sky.

THANK YOU

Download the Grievance Mechanism Toolkit [here](#)

advisory@oxfam.org.uk

Notes from the call

Item	Action	Who
Case studies	Look into creating shared resource on how to say things e.g. “Health and Safety” in common languages	WG Leads, Surmaya
Q3 Planning	Follow up on existing work on Skills Matrix	Surmaya, Lydia
Q3 Planning	Host Q3 in person meeting on 25 th September – will be hosted by Hugh Lowe Farms in Kent	Fiona McKerrow, Dole
Tools and Resources	Volunteers to test out the Employee Engagement Maturity Assessment and complete feedback form	Carl Cooper, Westbridge Sandra Cantwell, Prepworld

THANK YOU!

Additional resources on grievance mechanisms

Example Palm Oil Grievance Mechanism

- Grievance and remedy mechanism **specifically tailored for palm oil** (as a high-risk issue), incl. escalation of 'key incidents'
- **Transparent reporting** with regular updates on grievances and remedies provided
- **Requirement for suppliers** of palm oil (and other high-risk commodities) to have grievance mechanism in place, report relevant issues raised to Unilever and remediate where supplier caused / contributed to harm



Unilever's Palm Oil Grievance Tracker Updated December 2022

This document lists grievances that have been raised to Unilever concerning our palm oil supply chain. Unilever defines a palm oil grievance as a complaint sent to Unilever about an alleged breach of Unilever's [Human and Labour Policy](#) and/or the associated [Guidelines](#). Unilever works closely with our suppliers, grievance raisers, and other stakeholders to investigate and resolve issues within our supply chain in a timely, transparent, and effective manner.

A. Direct suppliers' with supply chain grievances

Supplier Name	References
1. ABC	ABC, DEF, GHI
2. DEF	DEF, GHI, JKL
3. GHI	GHI, JKL, MNO
4. JKL	JKL, MNO, PQR
5. MNO	MNO, PQR, RST
6. PQR	PQR, RST, UVW
7. RST	RST, UVW, XYZ
8. UVW	UVW, XYZ, ABC
9. XYZ	XYZ, ABC, DEF
10. ABC	ABC, DEF, GHI
11. DEF	DEF, GHI, JKL
12. GHI	GHI, JKL, MNO
13. JKL	JKL, MNO, PQR
14. MNO	MNO, PQR, RST
15. PQR	PQR, RST, UVW
16. RST	RST, UVW, XYZ
17. UVW	UVW, XYZ, ABC
18. XYZ	XYZ, ABC, DEF
19. ABC	ABC, DEF, GHI
20. DEF	DEF, GHI, JKL

B. Third-party/indirect suppliers' with supply chain grievances

Supplier Name	References
1. ABC	ABC, DEF, GHI
2. DEF	DEF, GHI, JKL
3. GHI	GHI, JKL, MNO
4. JKL	JKL, MNO, PQR
5. MNO	MNO, PQR, RST
6. PQR	PQR, RST, UVW
7. RST	RST, UVW, XYZ
8. UVW	UVW, XYZ, ABC
9. XYZ	XYZ, ABC, DEF
10. ABC	ABC, DEF, GHI
11. DEF	DEF, GHI, JKL
12. GHI	GHI, JKL, MNO
13. JKL	JKL, MNO, PQR
14. MNO	MNO, PQR, RST
15. PQR	PQR, RST, UVW
16. RST	RST, UVW, XYZ
17. UVW	UVW, XYZ, ABC
18. XYZ	XYZ, ABC, DEF
19. ABC	ABC, DEF, GHI
20. DEF	DEF, GHI, JKL

References: [Palm oil grievance procedure](#); [Palm oil grievance tracker](#); [People & Nature Policy](#)

Nestle Example

Speak Up cases

	2021	2022
Total non-compliance concerns raised	2475	2516
Total cases substantiated	580	578
Total cases closed	1944	1758

What happens after you submit a report

Once you've submitted your report, it'll go through a few stages. Here's what will happen next.

1. Acknowledgement of your report
2. Triage
3. Escalation
4. Confidential investigation
5. You'll receive a decision

Nestlé prohibits any retaliation against an employee, individual or entity who has made a report. We'll also protect the rights of any implicated person.

Breakdown categories for Speak Up messages	Messages received	Messages substantiated
Abuse of power and/or mobbing/bullying	743	222
Unfair treatment	368	26
Labour practice	272	69
Harassment (excluding sexual harassment)	168	52
Fraud (misappropriation or misconduct on accounting/financial statement)	128	35
Safety and health	122	21
Violation of laws/regulations	120	27
Gifts, families and relatives, conflicts of interest	91	22
Bribery and corruption	88	22*
Violence and discrimination	86	16
Sexual harassment	81	36
Confidential information, Privacy Policy (data privacy, trade secrets, intellectual property)	65	8
Third-party compliance	54	8
Seeking compliance advice	43	5
MANCOM members related	27	6
Human rights (child labour, forced labour and modern slavery risks)	16	0
Environmental impact	14	2
Trade sanctions	12	0
Antitrust and fair dealing	9	0
Non-compliance with WHO Code	5	1
Executive Board member/senior managers in Switzerland	4	0

*Messages substantiated related to kickbacks and did not involve government officials.



Simple instructions on how to report a non-compliance concern and on what happens next. Transparency on status of grievances and how the insights are improving business human rights performance [Nestlé Global \(nestle.com\)](https://www.nestle.com)

Useful resources on grievance mechanisms

From FNET Learning Library



[Webinar - Grievance Mechanisms for Business and Human Rights | UN Global Compact](#)



[Aim Progress guidance on Grievance Mechanisms](#)



[Verite - An Introduction to Grievance Mechanisms](#)



[Worth Listening – Global Compact Business Guide](#)



[Disciplinary and grievance procedures: Guidance for managers | CIPD](#)



[ETI Access to Remedy – Practical Guidance for Companies](#)

Useful tools on grievance mechanisms

From FNET Learning Library



[Stronger Together
Sample Worker Interview
Questions](#)



[Workplace Critical Issues
Report \(Spain Toolkit\) -
Stronger Together](#)



[FNET - Best Practice in
approaches to having
workplace conversations](#)



[FNET Member Guidance
incl. Grievance and
Whistleblowing](#)

Best practice example

From FNET Learning Library

Grievance Handling - Golden Agri x

https://www.goldenagri.com.sg/sustainability/responsible-sourcing/grievance-handling/

gar
agribusiness and food

About Us Sustainability Products & Services

Grievance Handling

Home > Sustainability > Responsible Sourcing > Grievance Handling

Handling grievances

GAR values the input of all stakeholders in helping achieve the aims of our sustainability policies. We operate a transparent and accountable system where stakeholders can inform us of issues within our supply chain using our grievance procedure. This established system fosters open and inclusive dialogue with our stakeholders, including any individuals, government organisations, NGOs or media outlets.

Grievance procedure

Our grievance procedure below illustrates how GAR handles issues brought up by any internal and external parties. The grievance procedure ensures that as a company, we are agile and responsive to grievances, especially from external parties.

[Download our detailed grievance procedure here](#)

→

```
graph TD
    subgraph ExternalStakeholders [External Stakeholders]
        A[Grievance Raised: Pesticide, Mould, etc.]
        B[Personal Grievance referred to GAR, handled by GAR or published]
        C[Communicate outcomes to external stakeholders]
        D[Implement action plan and monitor if consistent with the Grievance procedure]
    end

    subgraph GrievanceUnit [Grievance Unit GAR]
        E[Confirm the issue is a Grievance using the simple Decision Tree]
        F[Record in the quality assurance database. List & engage with relevant parties]
        G[Progress Grievance: Monitor setting and key details and recommendations]
        H[Progress action plan to resolve Grievance and communicate with relevant parties]
        I[Monitor progress against action plan]
    end

    subgraph GrievanceCommittee [Grievance Committee]
        J[Decision: resolve]
        K[Decision: Escalate]
    end

    A --> E
    E --> F
    F --> J
    F --> K
    J --> G
    K --> B
    B --> C
    C --> D
    D --> I
```

Golden Agri Grievance reporting